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SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, II Field Force Vietnam Artillery (U)

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2. Information contained in this report is provided to the Commandants of the Service Schools to insure appropriate benefits in the future from lessons learned during current operations, and may be adapted for use in developing training material.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

*Kenneth G. Wickham*

KENNETH G. WICKHAM  
Major General, USA  
The Adjutant General

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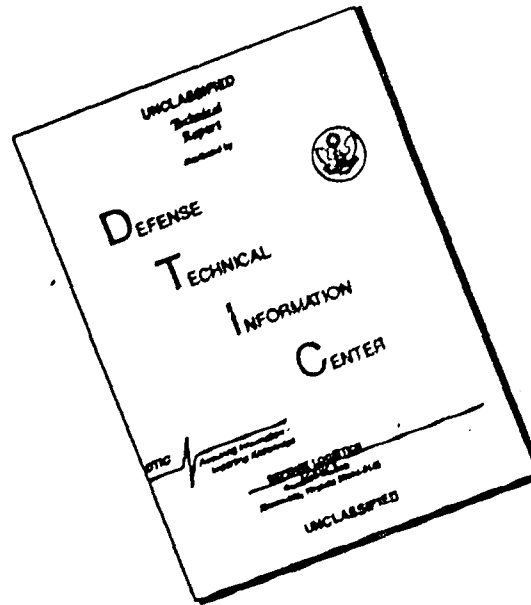
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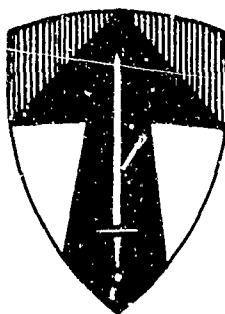
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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS II FIELD FORCE VIETNAM ARTILLERY  
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96266

14 NOV 1966



OPERATIONAL REPORT - LESSONS LEARNED  
QUARTERLY FOR PERIOD ENDING 31 OCTOBER 1966  
(RCS CSFOR-65) (U)

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## Section I - Significant Organization Activities.

### A. (FOUO) Administration/Personnel.

#### 1. Strength.

Headquarters and Headquarters Battery II FFORCEV Artillery is organized under TOE 6-501E with an authorized and assigned strength as of 31 October as follows:

<u>AUTHORIZED</u>			<u>ASSIGNED</u>		
<u>OFF</u>	<u>WO</u>	<u>EM</u>	<u>OFF</u>	<u>WO</u>	<u>EM</u>
34	2	159	29	2	167

#### 2. Gains and Losses.

<u>GAINS</u>			<u>LOSSES</u>		
<u>OFF</u>	<u>WO</u>	<u>EM</u>	<u>OFF</u>	<u>WO</u>	<u>EM</u>
11	0	32	12	0	34

#### 3. Casualties during the period include:

<u>TYPE</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>
Killed in action	0
Died of battle wounds	0
Wounded in action	0
Missing in action	0
Non-battle deaths	0
Non-battle casualties	15

#### 4. Personnel Management.

HQ, II FFORCEV Artillery S1 Section continued to perform administrative functions for the headquarters and to monitor personnel actions for the headquarters battery. The addition of the 54th Artillery Group Headquarters under the operational control of II FFORCEV Artillery called for only slightly additional administrative procedures, as the two group headquarters deal directly with HQ, USARV on matters of administration of personnel. The assignment of the HNB, 8/25th TAB to II

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FFORCEV Artillery somewhat increased the administrative load as personnel and administrative matters for the unit were channeled through II FFORCEV Artillery. The S1 continued to function as a staff coordinator and supervisor of many of the administrative and personnel activities of the headquarters battery. Mail delivery, religious services, TDY for rest and recuperation, and medical services were all provided by II FFORCEV for the battery with the assistance of the S1 section. The unit personnel section has been consolidated with the II FFORCEV AG Personnel Section since this headquarters became operational last March and is monitored by the S1.

## 5. Rest and Recuperation Program.

The following out of country R&R trips were taken by members of this headquarters:

<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>AUG</u>	<u>SEP</u>	<u>OCT</u>
Bangkok	1	5	4
Hong Kong	3	0	2
Tokyo	7	5	2
Taipei	1	0	0
Penang	1	0	0
Hawaii	1	3	1

## 6. Morale.

The morale of the organization continues to be outstanding.

## 7. Awards and Decorations.

The following awards and decorations were presented during the period:

Good Conduct Medal	9
Air Medal	7
Army Commendation Medal	5
Bronze Star Medal	9

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## 8. Discipline, Law, and Order.

There were no Summary Courts, Special Courts or General Courts conducted during the reporting period. The headquarters battery commander administered twelve Articles 15 for minor offenses during the period. On 6 October, eight detachments and companies under II FFORCEV were placed under CO, II FFORCEV Artillery for administration of Articles 15, Summary Courts Martial, and Special Courts Martial by CG, II FFORCEV. This action increased the number of judicial actions accomplished by this headquarters.

## 9. Safety.

The battery sustained two minor vehicle accidents during this period.

## 10. Civil Affairs.

The Staff Chemical Officer continued to perform additional duties as the S5. Food and clothing provided by USAID were distributed by II FFORCEV Artillery to the hamlets of HONAI VAN COI and MAU TAM, to include the orphanage at MAU TAM. Both hamlets and the orphanage are in the vicinity of the unit's compound at LONG BINH. Recently 600 school kits were distributed to the school children of those hamlets. Additionally, this headquarters made arrangements for weekly visits to each of these hamlets by a Medical Team (MEDCAP) from the STAB, 25th Arty. The MEDCAP Program has been in effect for several weeks and has been well received by the people of HONAI VAN COI and MAU TAM.

## 11. Public Information Program.

A public information program is being conducted under the direction of the S1 Section. Ceremonies for awards and decorations, promotions, arrivals of new units, civic actions, and other activities of the headquarters were covered by the public information program. Stories were released for publication in news media including the Army Times, and the Cannoneer, published at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. In addition, the program includes numerous home town releases.

## 12. Change of Command.

On 7 September 1966, Brigadier General Willis D. Crittenberger, Jr. was transferred to the American Embassy in SAIGON for a special assignment. Colonel George R. Allin, Jr. assumed command of II FFORCEV Artillery. Colonel Allin commanded II FFORCEV Artillery from its activation on 17 January 1966 at Fort Sill, Oklahoma until 10 March 1966 and again from 24 April to 23 May 1966. He was Deputy Commander during the interim periods.

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## B. (S) Operations/Intelligence.

### 1. (C) General.

Operations and intelligence activities of the headquarters during the reporting period included many of the same subjects reported in the previous quarterly operational report as well as several new projects. Stationing plans for artillery units were affected by a number of changes in the troop program and in the tactical situation in Vietnam. New attempts were made to obtain adequate numbers of observation and command and control aircraft for groups and battalions under the operational command of this headquarters. Assistance to ARVN in artillery employment continued to receive major emphasis. Acting on a recommendation by this headquarters, CG, II PFORCEV recommended in a letter of 27 October to the Deputy CG, USARV that an artillery section be added to Headquarters, USARV to coordinate artillery matters affecting Vietnam as a whole.

### 2. (S) Plan for Stationing of Artillery Units.

a. The plan for stationing of incoming US artillery units referred to in Section I, paragraph B2 of the Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 July 1966, was considerably revised by this headquarters during the reporting period. The stationing plan has been under continual review dictated by the changing tactical situation, the introduction of additional major US maneuver elements into III Corps Tactical Zone (CTZ) and changes in the troop program. The 196th Infantry Brigade (Separate) at TAY NINH, the 3d Brigade, 4th Infantry Division at BEAR CAT, the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment in the XUAN LOC area and the 2d Battalion, 34th Armor (2/34th Armor) of the 4th Infantry Division at LONG BINH all deployed from CONUS to the III CTZ during the period. The revised plan for the stationing of II PFORCEV Artillery units is shown at Inclosure 1. Range capabilities of 175mm gun units disposed in accordance with the stationing plan are shown on the map at Inclosure 2. Range capabilities of other weapons of divisional and non-divisional artillery units lie within the capability circles of the 175mm gun and are hence not shown on the map.

b. The main body of Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 8th Target Acquisition Battalion, 25th Artillery (8TAB, 25th Arty) arrived in country on 13 August. However, the unit's equipment did not arrive until 4 October because of a breakdown of the ship on which it was transported. The unit became operational on 19 October. It is assigned to this headquarters and is stationed at LONG BINH. One meteorological section is currently stationed at NUI DAT and the other is at LONG BINH. The survey elements of the unit are engaged in extending control to present and future position areas for both US and ARVN artillery units.

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c. COMUSMACV in SECRET message, MACCOC12 42084, COMUSMACV, DTG 191239Z Sep 66, subj: Deployment of 175mm Gun Battery (U), directed II FFORCEV to move a 175mm gun battery to SAIGON Port by 25 Sep for deployment to I CTZ. Battery B, 6th Battalion, 27th Artillery (6/27th Arty) stationed at PHUOC VINH was selected as the unit to be deployed. Based on operational requirements in I CTZ, the unit was augmented by the battalion to provide an increased capability for personnel management, survey, maintenance, supply and communications. The unit's move from PHUOC VINH to SAIGON required extensive engineer support and a major road clearing operation. The primary terrain obstacle was the SONG BE River which could not be crossed on the existing bridge. First, a crossing site near the bridge which was suitable for rafts had to be secured. Then a sizeable engineer effort was required to prepare the approaches to the site to permit crossing by rafts. Rafting equipment was brought in by air and assembled on site. Special training in rafting procedures prepared the battery for the crossing. On 24 September the unit departed PHUOC VINH, crossed the SONG BE River, and moved to a bivouac position about two kilometers south of the river. They moved the following day to LONG BINH. An advance party had left PHUOC VINH by air on 23 September for I Corps. The unit's equipment was moved from LONG BINH to SAIGON Port on 26 September for loading aboard LST's, departing the Port on 27 September. On 29 September, the battery personnel were airlifted from BIEN HOA AB. All personnel and equipment closed at DA NANG on 29 September and operational control of the unit passed to CG, III Marine Amphibious Force.

d. The advance party of the 54th Artillery Group, consisting of 5 officers and 8 enlisted men, arrived at BIEN HOA AB from Ft. Bragg, N.C. on 20 September and was quartered by this headquarters as host unit at LONG BINH. After initial orientations and briefings by II FFORCEV Artillery, the advance party began preparation for receipt of the main body. By 27 September most of the advance party had relocated to XUAN LOC, the unit's final destination. The main body arrived by ship on 1 October at VUNG TAU and was airlifted the same day to XUAN LOC where it was billeted with the 2d Battalion, 35th Artillery (2/35th Arty). The unit's equipment arrived at SAIGON Port on 4, 5, and 6 Oct and was convoyed via LONG BINH to XUAN LOC. The group became operational on 20 October 1966. The 2/35th Arty was reassigned from the 23d Arty Gp to the 54th Arty Gp, effective 20 October 1966, by General Order # 6111, HQ, USARV, dated 22 Oct 66.

e. The advance parties of both the 1st Battalion, 40th Artillery (1/40th Arty)(105mm SP) and 2d Battalion, 94th Artillery (2/94th Arty)(175mm SP) arrived from Fort Sill, Oklahoma by air at TAN SON NHUT AB on 3 October and were escorted to CU CHI and LONG BINH respectively. By SECRET message, MACJ312 44363, COMUSMACV, DTG 051155Z Oct 66, subj: Deployment Location Change (U), the 1/40th Arty was

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diverted to I CTZ. The 2/94th Arty was also diverted to I CTZ by COMUSMACV in SECRET message, MACJ312 44377, COMUSMACV, DTG 051251Z Oct 66, subj: Deployment Location Change (U). Accordingly the advance party personnel of both battalions were airlifted on 6 and 7 October to DA NANG. The remainder of the battalions' personnel and the unit equipment were rerouted at sea to the I Corps area.

f. The 7th Battalion, 9th Artillery (7/9th Arty)(105mm T), originally planned for employment in IV CTZ was rescheduled for employment in III CTZ by COMUSMACV in SECRET message, MACJ312 44377, DTG 051251Z Oct 66, subj: Deployment Location Change (U), to replace the 1/40th Arty. The unit will be stationed at BEAR CAT and assigned to the 54th Arty Gp. However, since the 7/9th Arty was scheduled to arrive in country at about the same time as the 1st Battalion, 83d Artillery (1/83d Arty) (8" SP), which is also going to the 54th Group, it was decided that the 7/9th Arty would be received and staged by the 23d Arty Gp at PHU LOI. The 36-man advance party of the 7/9th Arty arrived from Fort Irwin, California at TAN SON NHUT AB on 12 October and proceeded immediately to PHU LOI. Unit equipment arrived at SAIGON Port on 26 October and the remainder of the unit's personnel arrived at VUNG TAU on 30 Oct. By the end of the period, the 7/9th Arty had planned a 7 November surface move to BEAR CAT and expected to become operational in battery increments between 10 and 22 November.

g. The 1/83d Arty also arrived in country during the period. The 54th Arty Gp, as host unit, received the 25-man advance party on 22 October and moved them from TAN SON NHUT AB to temporary quarters with Headquarters, II FFORCEV Artillery at LONG BINH. The remainder of the battalion personnel arrived at VUNG TAU on 31 October and moved to LONG BINH for staging. Unit equipment is scheduled to arrive on 20 November. The 1/83d Arty will be deployed as indicated in Inclosure 1. This inclosure also reflects the redeployments in other artillery units resulting from the positioning of the 1/83d Arty.

h. Section I, paragraph B2d of the previous Operational Report presented a discussion of plans for stationing of heavy artillery in LONG AN Province. During this reporting period, preparation continued to this end with a position being selected at BEN LUC. The terrain in the BEN LUC area has a very high water table and consists primarily of rice paddies. A massive engineer effort will be required before heavy artillery can occupy the position. Present estimates indicate that the position will be prepared by 1 March 1967, and the artillery battery, a composite 175mm/8", will occupy the position immediately thereafter.

i. A plan for stationing heavy artillery in the TAY NINH area was discussed in Section I, paragraph B2g of the previous Operational Report. That plan has been revised due to the loss of the 2/94th Arty to

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I Corps. Only one composite 175mm/8" battery was available for stationing at TAY NINH. Battery C, 2d Battalion, 32d Artillery (2/32d Arty) (175mm SP) moved two 175mm guns, on 19 Sep, from CU CHI to an area northwest of TAY NINH and occupied a position in the base camp of the 196th Infantry Brigade. The battery (-) was temporarily augmented by two 8" howitzers from Battery D, 3d Battalion, 13th Artillery (3/13th Arty) (8" SP), 25th Infantry Division, to form one composite 175mm/8" battery. C, 2/32d Arty will move its remaining pieces to TAY NINH as part of the restationing following the deployment of the 1/83d Arty.

### 3. (S) Aircraft for Artillery Units.

a. In Vietnam, artillery units must have aircraft support to perform their mission. As pointed out in the Operational Report for May - July 1966, observation aircraft are required for visual reconnaissance, registration and adjustment of fire. Equally important is the need for helicopters for command and control purposes.

b. In III Corps Tactical Zone, the battalions of groups, and in many cases, the batteries of battalions, are widely separated in their base camp locations. Inclosure 3 shows the base camp locations of the 23d Artillery Group, Inclosure 4 shows the current and planned base camp locations of the 54th Artillery Group. Distances shown on these inclosures are straight line distances; road distances are much greater, the roads are not secure, and travel on them requires an armed convoy.

c. Light and medium batteries of II PFORCEV Artillery are almost always out on tactical operations during which separation from their parent battalions becomes much greater. Inclosures 5 through 7 are typical battalion dispositions on specific dates and illustrate how batteries are widely separated from their battalion headquarters as the normal situation.

d. With these units deployed in widely dispersed locations, the group and battalion commanders are completely dependent on air transportation for themselves and their staffs to visit their subordinate units for the purpose of carrying out normal functions of command and control and to handle necessary administration and logistical matters. Without air transportation, commanders are unable to supervise the tactical and technical operations of subordinate units or to determine the status of training, discipline, maintenance and the many other effectiveness factors for which they are responsible. In addition they are not able to perform route and position reconnaissance, adjust artillery fire, or visit other headquarters for necessary coordination on the employment of their batteries. In short, they are confined to their own command posts where they cannot adequately carry out the functions of command.

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e. The 23d Artillery Group and its battalions deployed to Vietnam with authorized TOB aircraft. Based on the operating requirements peculiar to this environment, USARV further augmented this group's aircraft support to the following totals:

(1) Group Headquarters: Three O-1's, two OH-13's, and one U-6.

(2) Each Artillery Battalion: Two O-1's and one OH-13.

f. By DA message 763149, dated 3 May 1966, DA directed that future combat support units, including artillery units, would deploy without aviation support. As a result of this policy, Headquarters, 54th Artillery Group, and its battalions, 2/35th Arty, 1/83d Arty and 7/9th Arty arrived in country without aviation assets. The 2d Battalion, 11th Artillery (11th Arty) (155mm T) is scheduled to arrive in December 1966 without aircraft.

g. As a result of this action, the effectiveness of the 54th Artillery Group has been seriously impaired. To alleviate the situation, II FFORCEV has normally provided the 54th Group two O-1 aircraft from its resources and the 23d Artillery Group has been directed to provide one OH-13 each day from its already austere assets. This limited support has been inadequate when only the group headquarters and one battalion (2/35th Arty) were operational. As the other two battalions (1/83d Arty and 7/9th Arty) become operational, the situation will become extremely serious.

h. USARV, in SECRET message AVHAV-P 53432, HQ, USARV, subj: Avn Spt for CS and CSS Units, dtd 2 Aug 66, proposed a plan by which a total of twenty-two O-1 aircraft and eight OH-13 helicopters would be furnished to support the requirements of the two artillery groups and nine battalions that will comprise II FFORCEV Artillery. This plan was accepted by II FFORCEV as an interim solution, but there is no indication that these assets will be provided in the near future.

i. This headquarters considers the minimum requirements for continuous operations to be one OH-13 or OH-23 and two O-1's per battalion and two OH-13's or OH-23's and three O-1's per group headquarters. A total of thirteen helicopters and twenty-four O-1's would thus be required. The 54th Artillery Group has an immediate requirement for the helicopters, without which its operations will continue to be seriously impaired.

#### 4. (S) Requirements for Additional Countermortar Radar Sets.

a. The continued use of mortars by the Viet Cong against key installations substantiates the need for additional countermortar

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radars for airfields, base camps and other vital installations. The limited sector scan of current sets and the all around threat to installations creates a heavy requirement for countermortar radar sets.

b. On 31 May 1966, a letter was submitted to the Commanding General, USARV, requesting that thirty-seven separate artillery countermortar radar detachments be added to the troop program with a high priority. By SECRET message AVHGC-FD 53603, USARV, DTG 120152Z Aug 66, subj: Requirement for Counter mortar Detachments (U), this headquarters was informed that the additional thirty seven radar detachments have been programmed with a requirement date of mid-1967.

c. A request was made by SECRET message AVFB-FAD 80581, HQ, II FFORCEV, DTG 170740Z Aug 66, subj: Requirements for Countermortar Detachments (U), that the requirement date be accelerated as much as possible to meet the critical need for countermortar protection. By SECRET message AVHGC-FD 55676, HQ, USARV, DTG 201216Z Aug 66, subj: Cntr Mtr Det (U), CG, USARV requested information from DA as to the feasibility of accelerating the deployment of those detachments. No further information has been received on this action.

d. There are now three countermortar radar sets employed in the Capital Military District. Two are at TAN SON NHUT Air Base and the other at the POL storage facility at NHA BE, approximately 7 kilometers southeast of SAIGON. Two additional radar sets have been programmed for TAN SON NHUT Air Base.

## 5. (S) Assistance to ARVN.

As reported in previous Operational Reports of this headquarters, an important continuing mission of II FFORCEV Artillery is that of helping the Army of Vietnam in the employment of its artillery and of improving US artillery support of ARVN. A number of significant steps in this direction were taken during this period, as shown by the following examples:

a. After a number of Regional Force (RF) or Popular Force (PF) outposts in III CTZ had been overrun by Viet Cong, this headquarters decided to make first hand checks on the responsiveness of ARVN and US/PWMAF artillery within range of RF/PF outposts and ARVN installations. On 4 August, a visit was made to BA RIA in PHUOC TUY Province to discuss this matter with the Sector Advisor and his Vietnamese counterparts, along with representatives of the 1st Field Regiment of the 1 Australian Task Force (1 ATF), and 10th ARVN Division. It was determined that classes in observed fire procedures for personnel of the RF/PF outposts would be desirable. Classes were conducted by officers of this headquarters for about 50 RF/PF personnel representing all the outposts in

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the vicinity of BA RIA, followed by service practice using an ARVN artillery platoon during which a large number of the students adjusted fire. In addition to the classes, a check was made to determine if each outpost had defensive concentrations which were plotted on the firing chart of the ARVN artillery. Some defensive concentrations were fired in using an ARVN artillery observer in an O-1 supplied by this headquarters. The effectiveness of communications was also investigated. The 1st Field Regiment was asked to fire in defensive concentrations around all outposts within range and this was accomplished in large part. As a result of this visit, it was decided to visit all of the provinces in III CTZ to accomplish the same ends. Visits to HAM TAN in BINH TUY Province and XUAN LOC in LONG KHANH Province were made. No assistance was needed in BINH TUY Province and the work in LONG KHANH Province remains to be done. Other provinces will be visited and assistance will be provided as part of this continuing project.

b. On 9 September, Headquarters, II FFORCEV published an LOI prepared by this headquarters in which subordinate commanders were requested to establish communications between their artillery units and friendly units, installations, and outposts within artillery range. The objective is to provide timely artillery fire in support of any friendly units or installations. This action was a follow-up to the actions described in the preceding paragraph. A copy of this LOI is at Inclosure 8.

c. The Capital Military District (CMD), which has a unique status among the political sub-divisions of III Corps Tactical Zone as the seat of the national government, was also visited several times during the period.

(1) Between 6 and 25 August, this headquarters conducted a study of the artillery support available for the defense of TAN SON NHUT Air Base (in the CMD), and developed recommendations for improving that support. The recommendations were briefed to and approved by COMUSMACV on 25 August.

(2) On 15 September, the CO and Assistant Fire Support Coordinator from this headquarters visited the Senior Advisor, CMD, to offer assistance in artillery matters. Sensitive areas in CMD, to include locations of tactical units and RF/PF outposts, along with the fire capabilities of artillery units to support their defense areas, were discussed. In addition, the capabilities of personnel at RF/PF outposts to call for and adjust artillery fire and the difficulties which exist in firing into and out of CMD were mentioned. As a result of this visit, it was decided that officer teams from this headquarters would visit each district in the CMD to discuss available fire support with the district chief and his advisor. Classes will be given, if requested, in observed fire procedures to personnel from RF/PF outposts, and defensive concentrations will be

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fired in around each RF/PF outpost where this has not already been done. Suggestions for improving communications have been made. Coordination was effected with the 25th ARVN Division and US artillery units capable of firing into CMD so that the fire of artillery units outside of CMD could be called for by outposts within CMD.

(3) Since CMD has no Artillery Advisor, on 19 September this headquarters placed an officer there on temporary duty as the Acting Artillery Advisor. His job has been to coordinate the ARVN and US artillery support available to CMD to insure that all friendly units, installations and outposts can call for immediately responsive artillery fires. He has assisted in coordinating the projects discussed in the preceding paragraph. Headquarters, MACV has recently authorized a permanent Artillery Advisor to CMD. However, until an officer is assigned, this headquarters will continue to furnish an officer to act in that capacity.

(4) On three occasions during the period, US artillery batteries were moved into CMD, on request of the Senior Advisor, to provide defensive fires and to support operations.

## 6. (C) Harassment and Interdiction (H&I) Program.

a. This headquarters continued to review the H&I program to improve its effectiveness. During the reporting period it was decided to be more selective in the targets placed in this program, emphasizing the most recent intelligence and confirmed enemy locations. It was also decided to attack each target with a heavier volume of fire rather than firing one or two rounds on it, two or three times. While H&I expenditures have remained at approximately the same level as previously, it is believed that there is a greater return in terms of effect on the enemy.

b. It is interesting to note that both the 1st and 25th Infantry Division Artilleries, which also operate in this CTZ, have independently reduced the number of targets attacked by H&I fires, and have also increased the number of rounds fired on each target. It is felt that the overall result has been a gain in effectiveness of all H&I programs.

c. The wear and tear of nearly a year of combat operations on the M107 175mm gun carriages of II FFORCEV Artillery units has led this headquarters to place restrictions on the use of Zone 3 with these weapons. At the present time, Zone 3 is fired only against targets of real tactical significance. The completion of a scheduled replacement program for the self-propelled carriages will result in a lifting of these restrictions.

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## 7. (C) Programs to Increase the Accuracy of Artillery.

a. As reported in paragraph B10 of Section I of the last Operational Report, this headquarters has initiated meteorological, survey and calibration programs to provide for greater accuracy of artillery fires in the corps area.

### b. Artillery Ballistic Meteorology (Metro).

A comparative ballistic meteorological analysis between XUAN LOC and NUI DAT was conducted during this period. As a result of this test it was determined that a metro section should be employed at both locations. Ballistic temperatures and densities between the two locations were fairly compatible, differing by less than two percent. However, wind speeds and directions varied considerably and, depending upon the azimuth of fire, use of metro from one point while firing from another could cause major differences in the computed point of impact and the actual point of impact of an artillery projectile. The 2/35th Arty Metro Section has been operational at XUAN LOC for several months and in December the 1/83d Arty Metro Section will be emplaced at NUI DAT. As an interim measure, a metro section from HHB, 8TAB, 25th Arty was emplaced at NUI DAT on 23 October and will provide metro support until the 1/83d Arty becomes operational.

### c. Survey.

#### (1) Survey Operations.

The program for extending artillery survey control in the corps area progressed considerably during the period. Third-order control has been established at TAY NINH, CU CHI, PHU LOI, BIEN HOA and LONG BINH by the 569th Engr Co (Topo) and at NUI DAT by the Royal Australian Survey Corps. Fourth-order control has been established at LAI KHE and BEN CAT by HHB, 8TAB, 25th Arty, and along Highway LTL 2, seven kilometers north and south of NUI DAT by the Divisional Survey, 1 ATF. Organizations with third-order accuracy survey capability now in III CTZ are the 66th Engr Co (Topo) and the Royal Australian Survey Corps, 1 ATF. After gaining third-order starting control from these organizations or recovering existing control, the Divisional Survey, 1 ATF and HHB, 8TAB, 25th Arty should be able to extend fourth-order control to all US/FWMAF and ARVN artillery units by April 1967. Two months slippage in the estimated completion date of the artillery survey program, as forecast in the last Operational Report, has occurred because the 569th Engr Co (Topo) was not able to accomplish all requested projects during the summer, the 8TAB, 25th Arty did not receive its equipment until 4 October 1966, and the 66th Engr Co (Topo) did not receive its equipment until 29 October 1966.

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#### d. Location of Artillery Pieces.

3. 47th St. and North St. accidents.

Waste time and effort in the delivery and mortar fire in which become a habit. During this period, this headquarters monitors closely the situation in the nature. The studies conducted for the purpose of the delivery to artillery employment in a more efficient manner. The studies are being conducted in a corrective nature and the results will be reported to the command. As a result of this study, the command will be able to deliver safety. The studies of the command will be completed by 1 Oct. This study will be completed by 1 Oct. The results will be reported in delivery of artillery and mortar fire to the command, responsibility for error. A copy of this report will be furnished to the command. A copy of a command report will be furnished to the command. The command will be furnished in delivery of artillery and mortar fire to the command, responsibility for error. It is expected that the command will be able to deliver the number of artillery and mortar fire to the command. This headquarters maintains a continuing program of monitoring reports of artillery and mortar incidents. The command will be able to deliver timely advice and assistance where possible.

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## 9. (C) Safeguarding Aircraft from Friendly Artillery Fires.

a. II FORCEV Regulation 385-2, dated 23 July 1966, subj: "Safeguarding Aircraft from Artillery Fires" referred to in Section I, paragraph B of the previous Operational Report is currently under revision.

b. The current regulation, a copy of which was forwarded with the previous Operational Report, established air corridors during daylight hours in which Army aircraft may fly between frequently visited places in III CTZ, and into which artillery would not fire without notification to pilots. This regulation directed that each of the two US divisions establish a Division Artillery Air Control Agency (DAACA) to serve as a source of US artillery information for areas of III CTZ not covered by Tactical Areas of Responsibility (TAORs) or Areas of Operation (AORs).

c. On 24 August 1966, comments and/or recommendations for improvement of the regulation were requested from subordinate commands. A summary of the more significant comments follows:

(1) Warnings repeated every five minutes by DAACA of units firing through corridors, plus aircraft reporting flights outside corridors, and routing of pilots around fires affecting his flight, causes the radio frequency to be cluttered beyond an acceptable level.

(2) In order for the aviator to report point of exit, direction, route, altitude, and time of exit upon leaving the corridors he would have to refer constantly to a map to know his exact position. It is impractical for the H-19 or OH-13 pilot to transmit the above information continuously while in the corridor, and leaving the aircraft at the same time.

(3) The majority of friendly batteries in III Corps are collocated with airfields. Consequently, artillery is being fired through the corridors much of the time, necessitating continuous broadcasting.

d. It was apparent after reviewing the replies that the regulation had not been favorably accepted by units concerned. There was such unanimous opinion against the corridor concept that a different approach was indicated. A revision of the regulation incorporating comments and recommendations of subordinate units was proposed to CG, II FORCEV for approval. The most significant features of the proposed revision are as follows:

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(1) Ten Artillery Warning Control Centers (AWCC) currently in operation in III Corps will be utilized, thus eliminating the requirement for any significant increase in personnel and/or equipment.

(2) Each AWCC will furnish advisories upon request to include all artillery in its area of responsibility (US, ARVN, FVMAF). The current regulation does not provide for reporting of ARVN artillery firing.

(3) Frequencies and call signs of the AWCC will be unclassified and will not change unless absolutely necessary. If it is necessary to change a frequency it will be done by a NOTAM.

(4) Pilots will be able to contact an AWCC for advisories when nearing its area of responsibility. The advisories to the pilot will give:

- (a) Location of guns to nearest town.
- (b) Azimuth of fire in degrees.
- (c) Maximum ordinate.
- (d) Range to nearest mile.

Giving the location of guns to the nearest town will minimize the need for a map in the cockpit.

(5) Each commander assigned an AO for a specific operation will designate an agency or element of his command to receive reports of artillery firing in the AO and provide notification to aviation utilizing the appropriate frequency and call sign of his primary area of artillery warning responsibility.

(6) Incoming units assigned a TAOR or AO will establish an AWCC as soon as practical. New AWCC, all changes in call signs and/or frequencies, and any other information pertinent to AWCC will be published by 12th Aviation Group as NOTAMs.

## 10. (C) Deadline of Artillery Weapons.

A. The average daily deadline rate for the M107 in August 1966 was 2.8 weapons per day for 14 weapons or 20%. During the month of September 1966 the rate was 3.4 weapons per day for 16 weapons or 20% and a steady decline to 1.3 weapons per day for 12 weapons or 11% for the month of October 1966. This can be attributed to a better organizational

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1. Maintenance, repair and maintenance support, and greater stockage of repair parts. It also must be noted at this time that a reduction in Zone 3 firing has contributed to the decline of deadlined weapons.

2. The average daily deadline rate for the M110 in August 1966 was 0.7 weapons per day for 10 weapons or 7%. During the month of September 1966 the rate was 1.7 weapons per day for 8 weapons or 15% and declined to 0.9 weapons per day for 8 weapons or 11% for the month of October 1966. Improved organization and field maintenance as well as greater availability of repair parts are improving the maintenance posture of these weapons.

3. The average daily deadline rate for the M109 in August 1966 was 3.8 weapons per day for 18 weapons or 21%. During the month of September 1966 the rate was 3.0 weapons per day for 18 weapons or 17% and declined to 2.6 weapons per day for 18 weapons or 14% for the month of October 1966. It must be noted that although there has been a decline in the percentage of deadlined M109's, in certain instances there have been long periods of down time. (1 deadlined for 24 days (breech assembly), 1 other deadlined for 15 days (breech assembly) and 1 for 12 days (equilibrator - recuperator seal, summer swivel)). These instances highlight the shortage of repair parts in RVN, which places constant demand on Red Bull for repair parts support, thus creating the long periods of deadline. In numerous rectifier cooling fans have disintegrated for no apparent reason and frequent failure of recuperator seals and bore evacuator valves have contributed to the number of deadlined weapons.

4. Since the modified M-117 telescopes have been received no problems have been experienced with panoramic telescopes.

## 11 (C) Communications.

Communications efforts during this reporting period were directed primarily to coordinating the establishment of VHF circuits from the Battalion to superior and subordinate units and to the training of personnel in the Radio and Message Center sections.

### a. VHF Communications.

Due to the laying of wire lines for any great distance in this type of environment is not practical, VHF communications is an essential necessity. This is established primarily for quick and efficient communications. Both single user and common user circuits are utilized based on their availability. Normally, it is desirable to establish sole user circuits from operations to operations and common user circuits from switchboard to switchboard. VHF support for this headquarters has been supplied by the 53d Signal Battalion, and has become the primary means of communications for both tactical and administrative purposes when communicating outside of this headquarters.

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## b. Training and operations.

(1) To maintain a tactical proficiency for Message Center personnel, training was provided on the Central Office Teletype-center AN/MSC-17 and the Terminal Telegraph AN/MSC-29. To date this equipment has not been utilized in a tactical situation.

(2) During the reporting period approximately twenty-four hundred documents (SECRET, CONFIDENTIAL, FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY and UNCLASSIFIED) were processed by this headquarters's Message Center. This processing included logging, distributing and filing of all correspondence and the destruction of all SECRET documents within the headquarters. All newly assigned communications personnel were trained on Message Center procedures.

(3) This headquarters furnished communications personnel and equipment in support of subordinate unit's communications operations. This was made necessary because of the shortage of both personnel and equipment in the subordinate units. Two AN/GRC-46's and a total of twenty-five radio operators were sent to three units during the reporting period. This not only proved to be an aid to the supported unit but also maintained a high degree of proficiency among this headquarter's radio operators.

## 12. (U) Addition of Artillery Section to HQ, USARV.

Since this headquarters became operational in March 1966, there have been a number of actions involving artillery which were of concern to more than one corps tactical zone. The movement of a battery of heavy artillery from III CTZ to I CTZ in late September was a major undertaking and an example of an operation which could have been more efficiently handled at USAFV level by an artillery section in that headquarters. Staff officers at MACV, USARV, and 1st Logistical Command all became involved in the move of this battery from PHUOC VINH to DA NANG. Functions which could be accomplished by an Army artillery section at HQ, MACV include the determination of number and types of nonorganic artillery units required by the forces in the command to include special equipment. Such an artillery section could be used to recommend the allocation of various types of artillery, the assignment of personnel, and to determine replacement requirements for artillery units. Planning the reception and processing of artillery units, publishing information and intelligence of interest to artillery units, determining ammunition requirements and monitoring and controlling ammunition expenditures, and monitoring the artillery maintenance program are all functions which could also be performed by an artillery section at USARV. The increasing use of artillery in RVN will create more instances where artillery coordination

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must cross corps tactical boundaries. To improve the coordination of artillery matters throughout RVN, this headquarters recommended to CG, II FFORCEV that an artillery section similar to that found in the type field army be added to HQ, USARV. CG, II FFORCEV concurred in this recommendation and on 27 October 1966 dispatched a letter to DCG, USARV recommending this course of action. At the close of this reporting period no indication has been received as to whether this section will be established.

## 13. (C) Officer Replacements.

a. It has been the experience of this headquarters that officers who lack a strong Field Artillery background, including previous assignments in cannon artillery units, are of limited value in Field Artillery positions in the counterinsurgency environment of Vietnam. Within this headquarters, officers with training and experience mainly in Air Defense can be used only in positions not requiring Field Artillery experience. When used in other positions it imposes an increased load on the experienced Field Artillery officers. At the battery and battalion level, previous Field Artillery training and experience are essential. Division artillery commanders and the senior artillery advisor at III ARVN Corps have recently expressed concern at the influx of Air Defense trained officers for assignment in Field Artillery positions.

b. Four lieutenants, two 1964 and two 1965 graduates of USMA, were assigned to two of the units of II FFORCEV Artillery while the units were preparing for deployment to Vietnam. These officers had not attended the basic course for Field Artillery officers at Fort Sill, and consequently had to undergo considerable on-the-job training before becoming acceptably proficient as battery officers. During this period of expansion there is not time to train officers in units in the basic fundamentals of their branch. Additionally, knowledgeable officers are needed to train their men in order to prepare for overseas deployment in a minimum time.

## 14. (U) Maps.

a. This headquarters received the basic load of new map series (L7014), 1:50,000 on 6 October. These maps were photo revised from 1965-66 aerial photography. The accuracy obtained from this new series will improve the efficiency of artillery operations.

b. On 2 September a supply of maps was received that had been photostatically reduced from a scale of 1:50,000 to 1:100,000. However, they could not be utilized due to illegible symbols and a lack of relief contrast. A need still exists for a satisfactory 1:100,000 map of Vietnam.

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## Section II, Part 1 - Observations/Lessons Learned.

### Employment of Heavy Artillery

Item: Employment of composite 175mm/8" batteries.

Discussion: The experience of nearly a year of combat operations in III CTZ has shown that the fires of two 175mm guns and two 8" howitzers are normally adequate to provide heavy artillery support from any given location. By forming composite 175mm/8" batteries in all heavy battalions of II FFORCEV Artillery and employing them separately, the area covered by these units was greatly expanded. Limiting factors in extending coverage are the number of batteries available and the requirement to station batteries in base camps of major maneuver elements to obtain necessary security.

Observation: Employing heavy artillery by composite 175mm/8" batteries affords the maximum heavy artillery coverage and still provides adequate support from each location.

### Artillery Safety

Item: Artillery gunnery procedures.

Discussion: As discussed in paragraph B8, Section I, the presence of densely populated areas in III CTZ and the difficulty of pinpointing friendly troops operating in heavy jungle combine to make it absolutely necessary that standard gunnery procedures are followed rigidly, and that check systems are employed to detect gunnery or transmission errors before they result in rounds landing at other than intended targets. It is extremely important for artillery units to keep informed on current friendly locations.

Lesson Learned: There is no substitute for standard, battle tested gunnery procedures and double checks to insure that firing data is correctly computed and accurately applied to the pieces.

### Aircraft Safety

Item: Use of Air Corridors to Safeguard Aircraft from Friendly Artillery.

Discussion: In this combat environment, with artillery firing in all direction and with numerous aircraft operating in the same area, much thought has been given to the protection of aircraft from friendly artillery. Accordingly, II FFORCEV published Regulation 385-2 on 23 July 1966. This regulation established air corridors during daylight hours in which aircraft may fly between frequently visited places in III Corps,

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and into which artillery would not fire without notification to pilots. After 30 days of operation, major subordinate commands were requested to evaluate the corridor concept (Regulation 385-2). A summary of the comments and/or recommendations received from subordinate units and the action taken is discussed in paragraph R9, Section I of this report.

Lesson Learned: That both pilots and artillery units do not consider this corridor concept to be the most practicable and feasible manner to minimize the hazard to aircraft from friendly artillery in the III CTZ.

## Section II, Part 2 - Recommendations.

### A. (U) Schooling of Newly - Commissioned Officers.

In paragraph B13 of Section I it was pointed out that some newly-commissioned artillery officers were being assigned to units preparing for deployment to Vietnam without first attending the officer's basic course in Field Artillery at Fort Sill. This policy is contrary to that generally followed during World War II and the Korean conflict when all newly-commissioned officers attended the basic course prior to being assigned to units. Experience during those wars confirmed the desirability of that course of action. The West Point class of 1950 was an exception to this policy; the experience of this class resulted in a decision to have subsequent classes attend their branch basic course before being assigned to units.

#### RECOMMENDATION:

That all newly-commissioned Field Artillery officers, other than OCS graduates, be sent first to attend the basic course at Fort Sill before being assigned to Field Artillery units.

### B. (S) Aircraft for Artillery Units.

In paragraph B31, Section I, the minimum requirements in aircraft for continuous operations of the 54th Artillery Group and its assigned battalions was stated.

#### RECOMMENDATION:

Until these minimum requirements can be met, that the 54th Artillery Group and its subordinate battalions, 2/35th Arty, 1/83d Arty and 7/9th Arty each be provided one observation helicopter (OH-13 or OH-23) and two O-1 observation aircraft as an interim priority requirement. Of the two type aircraft needed, the light helicopters are the more urgent requirement as II FFORCEV has been able to temporarily provide minimal O-1 support from its fixed wing assets, but has no light observation helicopter resources.

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3. (U) Deployment of Equipment

When a moving GRC for RKN is required, the necessity to move their communications equipment is a major factor to be considered. A particularly true of the mobility of the equipment is the fact that it is not until just prior to departure for the GRC that the equipment is moved. This is due to the fact that the equipment is not moved until sufficient time for the crew to train on the new equipment and to check the equipment for proper operation.

The 54th Airillery Group, located at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, has issued the new series radio. These radio vehicles have been ordered for shipment. Consequently, the radio could not be mounted in the vehicles and checked before departure. Also, the 54th Group's M/GRC-46 radios were not modified and the crew in sufficient time to install the crypto machines and perform a functional check.

The 7/9th Army arrived in Germany with M/GRC-46 radios which had not been modified for the M-7 before departure to RKN.

4. (U) Deployment of Equipment

When communications equipment is issued to units alerted for deployment to RKN, it is modified as necessary as soon as possible after alert for movement. This will insure a much greater degree of efficiency when the equipment is actually put into operation in RKN.

5. (U) 1:100,000 Map

Artillery battalions and supporting artillery often are assigned to tactical tasks which require their deployment over a wide area of operations. When mobility is not uncommon for such units to move a distance of 50 to 100 kilometers in a 24 hour period. The number of 1:100,000 maps required to cover the area of operations constitutes a bulky load. 1:250,000 maps have been used in some cases but have not proved satisfactory due to the lack of detail. A detailed 1:100,000 scale map could be used to great advantage.

6. (U) Map

It is suggested that a detailed 1:100,000 scale map of RKN be developed.

10 Incl  
as

*George R. Allen, Jr.*  
GEORGE R. ALLEN, Jr.  
Colonel, Artillery  
Commanding

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Location	Adj Gt 1st	Adj Gt 2nd	Adj Gt 3rd
A.O. 1st	Svc stry, 6/27th arty	Svc stry, 6/27th arty	Svc stry, 6/27th arty
	Svc stry, 2/35th arty	Svc stry, 2/35th arty	Svc stry, 2/35th arty
		Adj, 6/25th arty	Adj, 6/25th arty
A.O. 2nd	Stry A, 2/35th arty (155mm str)	Stry A, 2/35th arty (155mm str)	Stry A, 2/35th arty (155mm str)
			Svc, Svc, 1st, 2/35th arty (175mm str)
PHU 101	Adj, 23d arty up	Adj, 23d arty up	Adj, 23d arty up
	2/13th arty (105mm str)	2/13th arty (105mm str)	2/13th arty (105mm str)
			Adj, Svc, 2nd, 2/13th arty (105mm str)
A.O. 3rd	Adj, 6/27th arty	Adj, stry C, 6/27th arty (175mm/1st str) See note 4	Adj, stry C, 6/27th arty (175mm/1st str) See note 4
	Stry C, 6/27th arty ( " )		
	Stry C, 6/27th arty ( " )		

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LOCATION	AS OF 1 AUG	AS OF 31 OCT	AS OF 31 MAR 67
QUAN LOI	NONE	NONE	Btry A, 6/27th Arty (175mm/8" SP) (See Note 1)
TAY NINH	NONE	Btry C (-), 2/32d Arty (175mm SP)	Btry C, 2/32d Arty (175mm/8" SP) (See Note 2)
XUAN LOC	Btry A, 2/32d Arty (175mm/8" SP)	Btry A, 2/32d Arty (175mm/8" SP)	1 FB, 1/83d Arty (175mm/8" SP)
	HBB, Btrys B & C, 2/35th Arty (155mm SP)	HBB, Btrys B & C, 2/35th Arty (155mm SP)	HBB, Btrys B & C, 2/35th Arty (155mm SP)
		HBB, 54th Arty Gp	HBB, 54th Arty GP
<p>1/27th Arty (155mm SP) and 6/77th Arty (105mm T) are due to arrive in RVN in Mar 67. Stationing plans for these units are not firm. It is probable that stationing given above for 2/11th Arty (155mm T) will be affected by stationing of the two March battalions.</p>			

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NOTES

NOTE 1 : Btry A, 6/27th Arty will displace to XUAN LOI when replaced by a firing battery of the 1/83d Arty in November.

NOTE 2 : This platoon will be converted to 8-inch howitzer and displace to TAY NINH to join remainder of Btry C when A, 2/32d Arty displaces to CU CHI from XUAN LOC. (See Note 3)

NOTE 3 : A, 2/32d Arty will displace to CU CHI when the 1/83d Arty becomes operational and stations one firing battery at XUAN LOC. A, 2/32d Arty will later displace to GO DAU HA when a composite 175mm/8" battery is stationed at BEN LUC.

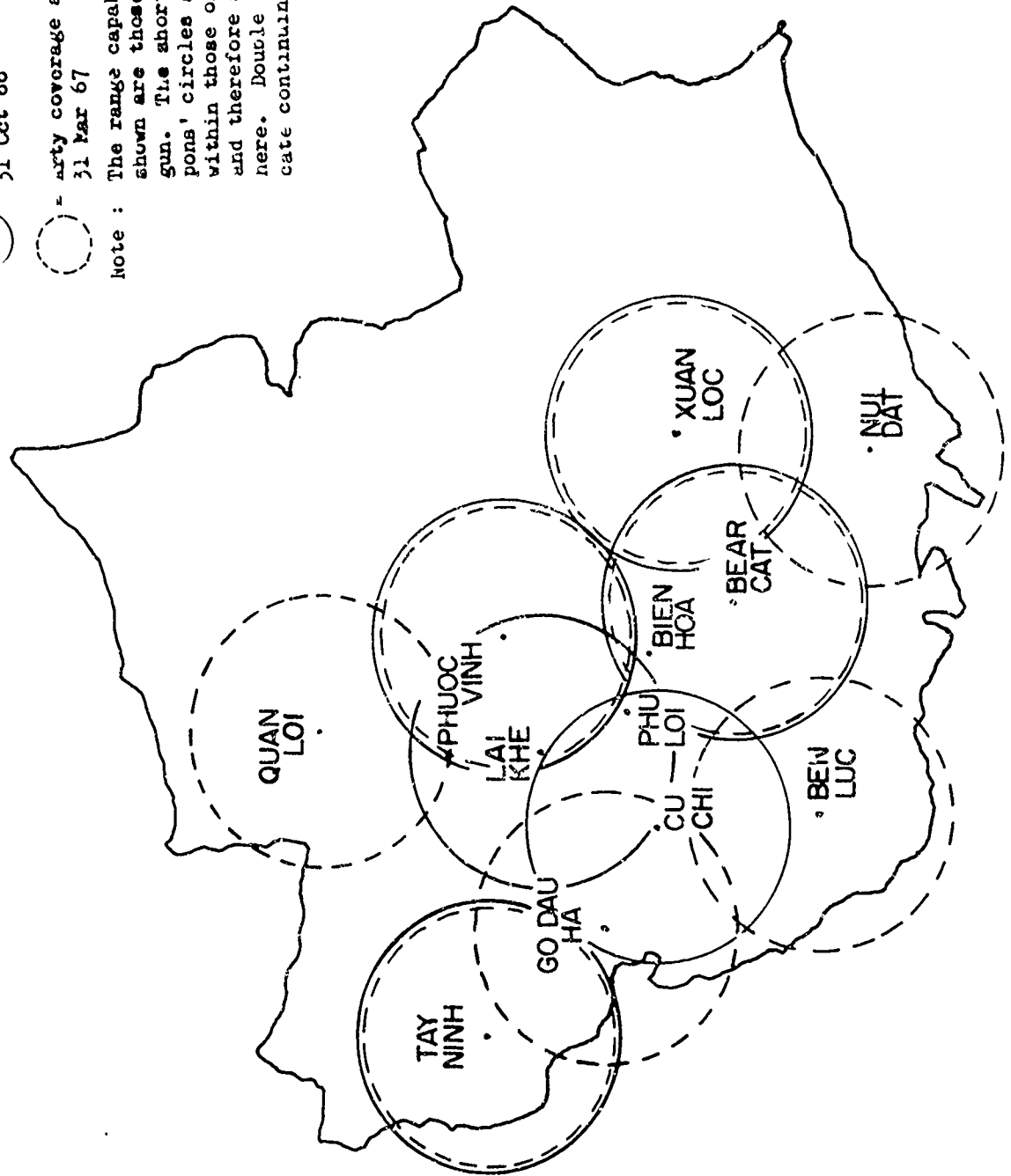
NOTE 4 : On 29 Sep 66, experienced personnel from Btry B, 6/27th Arty were transferred to Btry C. Btry C with its four 175mm guns was redesignated Btry B and deployed to I CH. Btry B was redesignated Btry C and converted two 8" tubes to 175mm guns to form a composite battery.

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○ arty coverage as of 31 Oct 66  
 ○ arty coverage as of 31 Mar 67  
 Note: The range capability circles shown are those of the 175mm gun. The shorter range weapons' circles are included within those of the 175mm and therefore are not shown here. Double circles indicate continuing coverage.

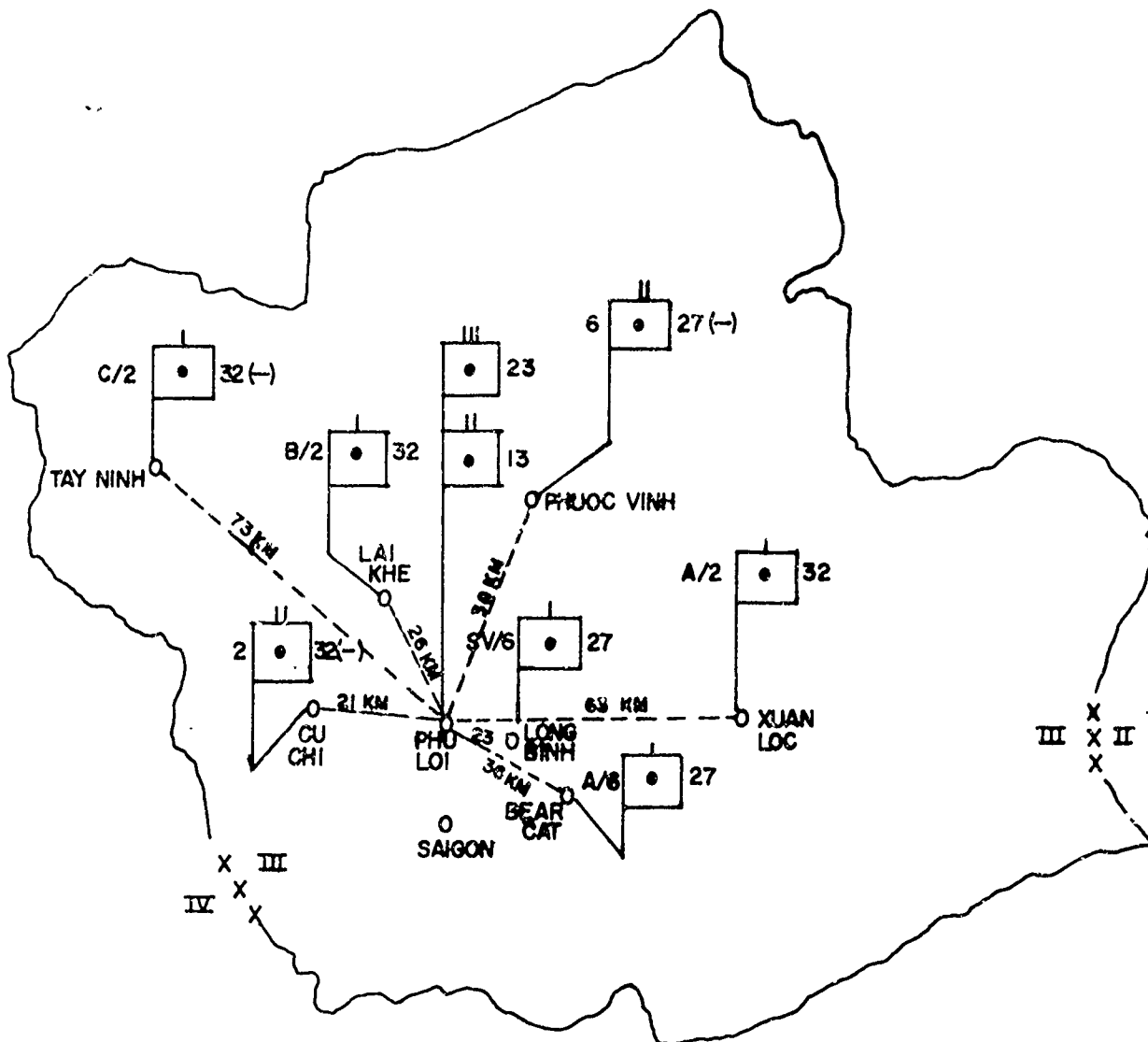


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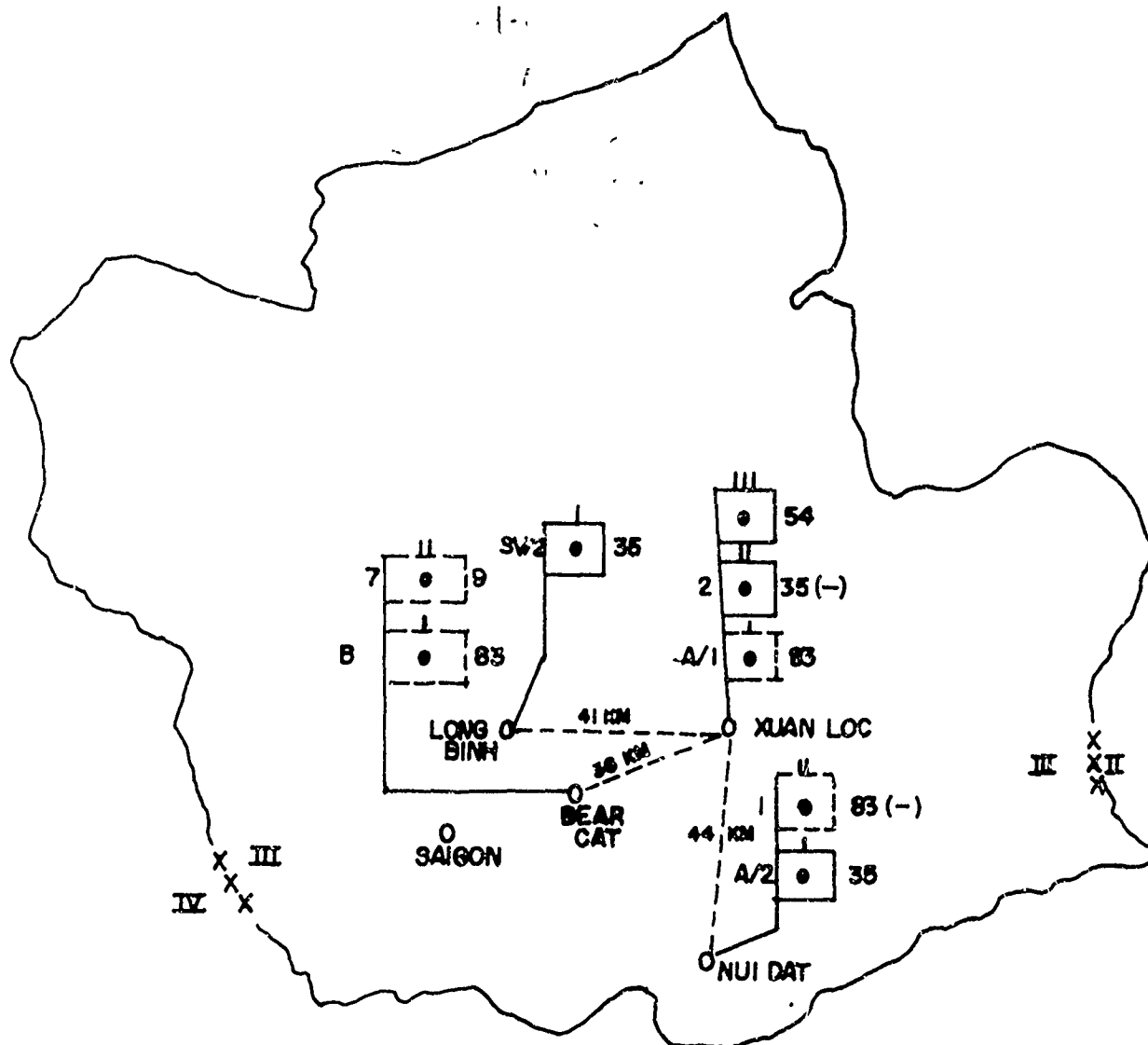
BASE CAMP DEPLOYMENT OF 23D ARTILLERY GROUP ON 31 OCTOBER 1966  
 HQ 23D ARTILLERY GROUP (PHU LOI)  
 2D BN (175/8") 32D ARTILLERY BN  
   HQS, SVC, 1 PLT, BTRY C (CU CHI)  
   BTRY A (XUAN LOC)  
   BTRY B (LAI KHE)  
   BTRY C (-) (TAY NINH)  
 2D BN (8"/175) 27TH ARTILLERY BN  
   HQS, BTRY C (PHUOC VINH)  
   BTRY A (BEARCAT)  
   SVC BTRY (LONG BINH)  
   BTRY B ATCHD III MAF  
 2D BN (105 T) 13TH ARTILLERY BN (PHU LOI)

INCL 3

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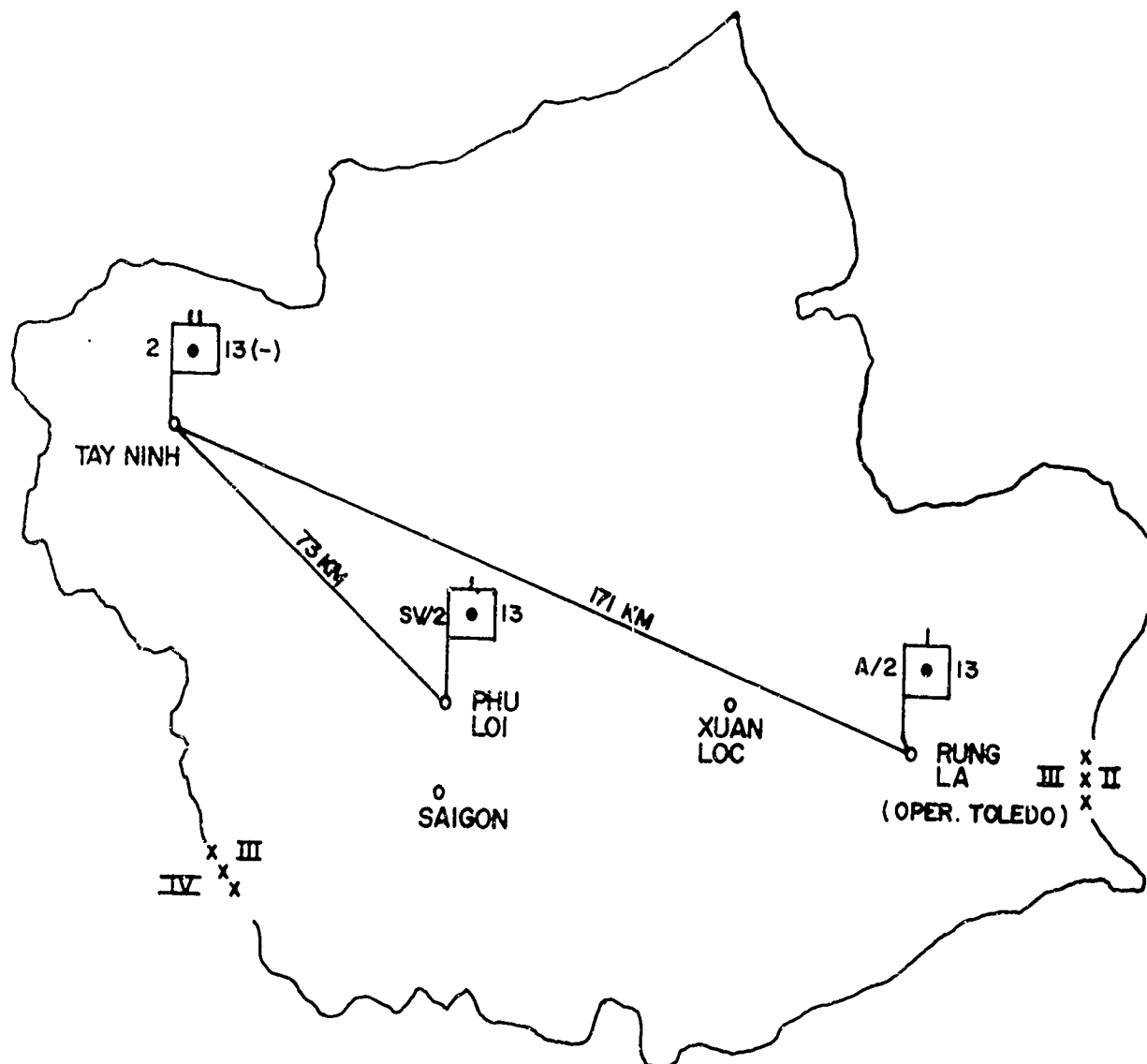


BASE CAMP DEPLOYMENT OF 54TH ARTILLERY GROUP  
 HQ 54TH ARTY GROUP (XUAN LOC)  
 2D BN (155 SP) 35TH ARTY (-) (XUAN LOC)  
 BTRY A (NUI DAT)  
 7TH BN (105 T) 9TH ARTY (BEAR CAT)  
 TO BE OPERATIONAL NOVEMBER 1966  
 1ST BN (8"/175) 83D ARTY (-) (NUI DAT)  
 BTRY A (XUAN LOC)  
 BTRY B (BEAR CAT)  
 (TO BE OPERATIONAL EARLY DECEMBER 1966)

**INCL 4**

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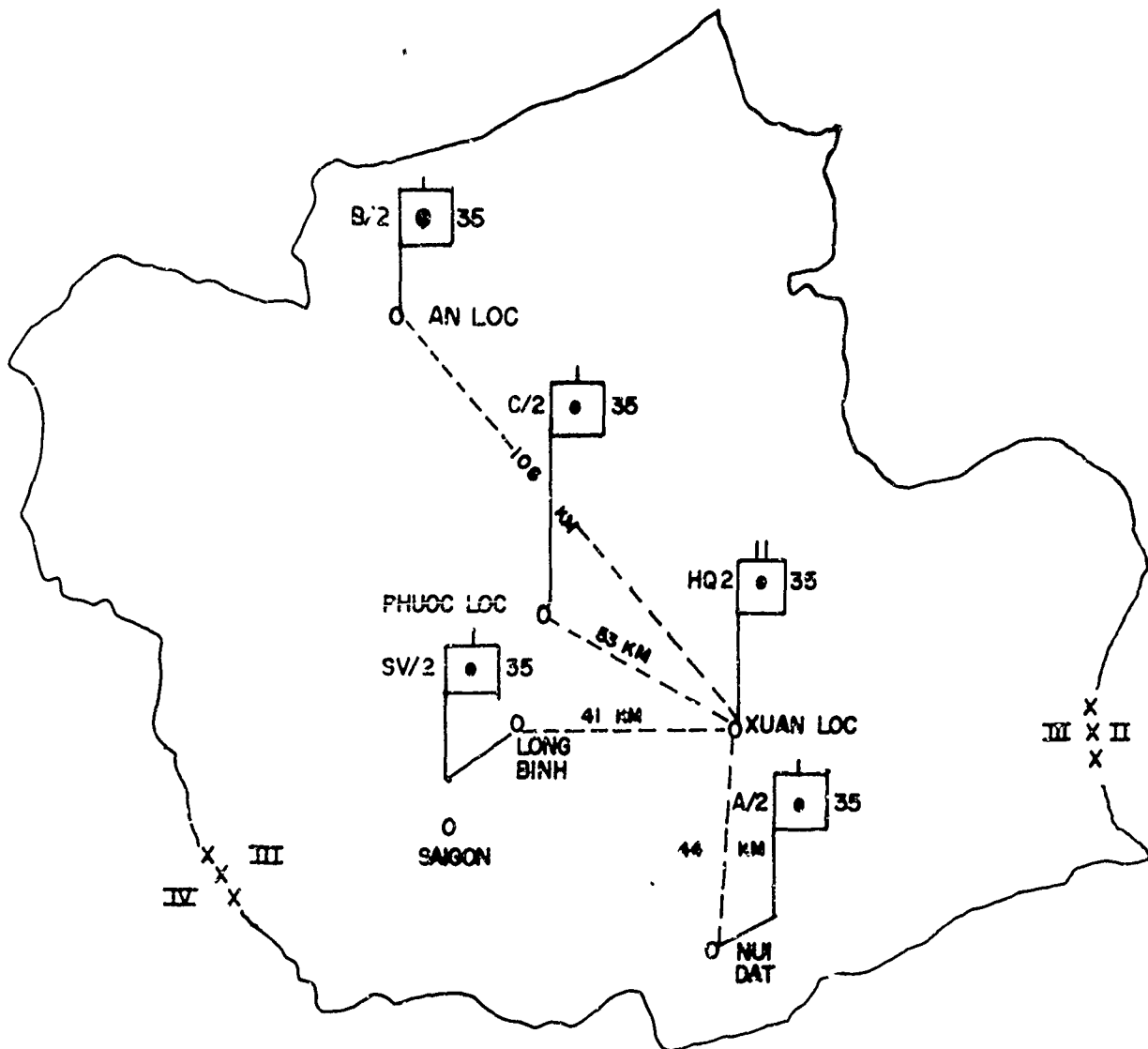
DEPLOYMENT OF 2D BN (105 T) 13TH ARTILLERY ON 4 SEPTEMBER 1966

**INCL 5**

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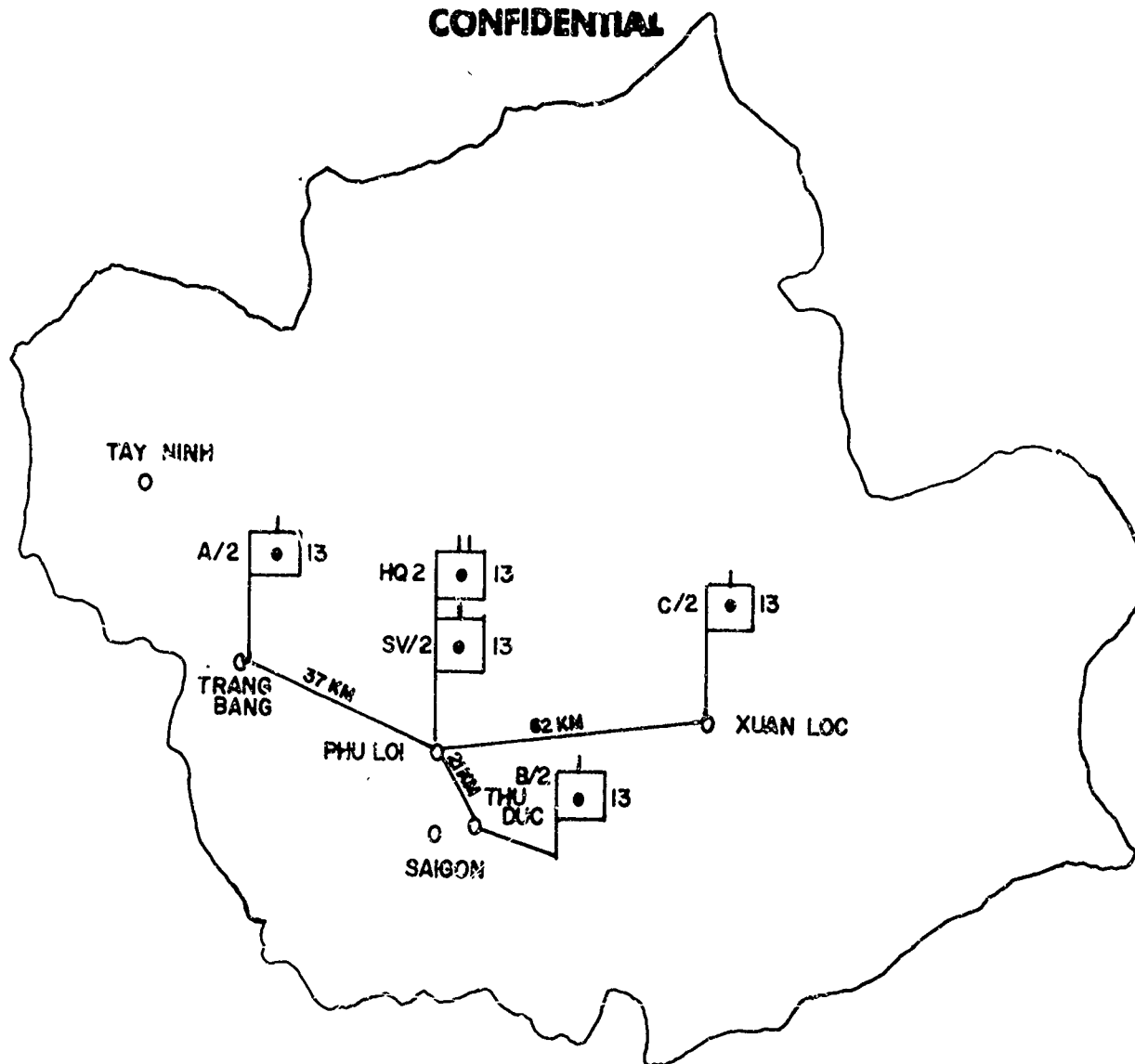


DEPLOYMENT OF 2D BN (155 SP) 35TH ARTILLERY ON 16 OCTOBER 1966

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DEPLOYMENT OF 2D BN (105 T) 13TH ARTILLERY ON 28 OCTOBER 1966

**INCL 7**

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS II FIELD FORCE VIETNAM  
APO San Francisco 96266

AVFB-FAC

9 September 1966

SUBJECT: Letter of Instruction (LOI -66) (U)

TO: SEE DISTRIBUTION

1. (U) PURPOSE:

To provide for the most effective employment of the artillery in III Corps Tactical Zone.

2. (C) CONCEPT:

Commanders should establish necessary communications between artillery units of their commands and friendly units, installations and outposts within range of their weapons to insure that immediately responsive artillery fires are available to support tactical operations and assist in the defense of installations and outposts.

3. (C) RESPONSIBILITIES:

a. US/FWMAF commanders under the operational control of this headquarters should:

(1) Establish communications between artillery units of their commands and ARVN units and installations in range of their weapons.

(2) Establish communications with province chiefs to insure that requests for fire from artillery units within range of outposts, hamlets and province and district towns can be processed with minimum delay.

(3) Establish communications between artillery units of their commands and Special Forces camps in range of their weapons to provide for artillery support of camp defense and operations conducted by forces from the camps.

b. US/FWMAF commanders and US advisors should encourage ARVN commanders to:

(1) Take cognizance of the ability of US/FWMAF artillery to assume support of GVN/ARVN installations, thereby releasing ARVN artillery units for restationing to improve artillery coverage and to permit the use of more ARVN artillery in support of operations.

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS  
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**INCL 8**

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AVFB-FAC

9 September 1966

SUBJECT: Letter of Instruction (LOI 5-66) (U)

(2) Offer available ARVN artillery support to US/FWMAF bases and operations.

(3) Coordinate displacements of ARVN artillery with US/FWMAF commanders concerned.

#### 4. (C) IMPLEMENTING INSTRUCTIONS:

a. The communications required by this LOI should be established both from base camps and from artillery bases in areas of operations, and will apply equally to GVN and ARVN forces in their base camps and on operations.

b. US advisors with GVN/ARVN should assist in effecting liaison when required.

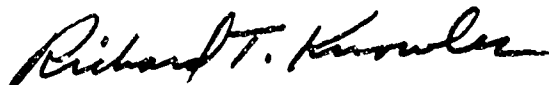
c. Fire planning and firing of check rounds on defensive concentrations should be done where applicable.

d. Artillery support should be planned for convoy movements.

e. Displacements of US/FWMAF artillery units should be coordinated with appropriate ARVN commanders, consistent with security requirements, in sufficient time to allow ARVN to displace ARVN artillery to cover areas left uncovered by movement of US/FWMAF artillery.

f. US/FWMAF commanders should offer meteorological and survey support to ARVN commanders where this support is available, and should assist US advisors with ARVN artillery units in providing technical training.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



RICHARD T. KNOWLES  
Brigadier General, GS  
Chief of Staff

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AVFB-FAC

9 September 1966

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CG, 1st Inf Div - 15  
CG, 25th Inf Div - 15  
CG, 173d Abn Bde (Sep) - 5  
CG, 1 ATF - 5  
CO, 23d Arty Gp - 15  
CO, 11th ACR - 5  
DSA, III Corps - 2  
Sr Arty Adv, 5th ARVN Div - 4  
Sr Arty Adv, 10th ARVN Div - 4  
Sr Arty Adv, 25th ARVN Div - 4

II FFORCEV

G1 - 1  
G2 - 1  
G3 - 3  
G4 - 1  
G5 - 1  
Engr - 1  
Signal - 1

II FFORCEV Arty

S1 - 1  
S2 - 1  
S3 - 25  
S4 - 1

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HEADQUARTERS II FIELD FORCE VIETNAM  
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
APO San Francisco 96266

REGULATION  
NUMBER 385-3

2 October 1966

SAFETY

PREVENTION OF ARTILLERY AND MORTAR INCIDENTS

1. REFERENCES:

- a. Directive Number 350-3, Headquarters, USMACV, dated 18 August 1966, subject: Education and Training, Proficiency Training.
- b. Regulation Number 335-5, this headquarters, dated 27 August 1966, subject: Reports, Investigation and Reporting of Incidents Involving Artillery and Mortar Fire, Naval Gunfire and Air Strikes.
- c. Letter of Instruction (LOI 6-66) (U), AVXC, this headquarters dated 27 September 1966.
- d. Letter, AVX-CG, this headquarters, dated 17 June 1966, subject: Errors in Artillery and Mortar Fires.
- e. Confidential Message, AVFB-FAC 80465, this headquarters, DTG 200237Z August 1966, subj: Employment of Fire Support (U).

2. PURPOSE: The purpose of this regulation is to establish systematic procedures, with adequate emphasis on safety, so that accurate and timely artillery and mortar fire can be delivered on targets in support of ground actions.

3. GENERAL:

- a. The role of artillery in counterinsurgency operations presents problems not previously faced in conventional wars. The intermingling of enemy with friendly inhabitants in and near friendly installations requires

INCL 9

diligent checks on firing data and absolute adherence by all artillery units to proven procedures and techniques. Gunnery errors which lead to the death or injury of friendly soldiers or noncombatants can be eliminated through sound training programs and active command supervision of every stage from the reception of a fire mission until the delivery of the rounds on the targets.

b. The need for immediately responsive fire support should not be satisfied at the sacrifice of the maximum possible accuracy in providing that support. This principle should be followed in all actions taken in compliance with this regulation.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES: All commanders will:

a. Publish SOP's appropriate to the level of command detailing the procedures to be followed within the command to insure that fires delivered by indirect fire weapons are accurate, timely and safe.

b. Institute continuing programs to train to the highest level of proficiency all personnel involved in processing fire missions, in preparing firing data, in transmitting fire commands and in serving the pieces.

5. PROCEDURES:

a. The SOP's written in compliance with this regulation will specify that checks are to be made at each step from the initiation to the termination of a fire mission.

(1) Particularly important are the checks to insure accurate transmission and recording of fire requests and firing data. Readback procedures must be habitually followed.

(2) SOP's will require the use of check charts, independent computation of firing data by at least two persons, and checks to insure that proper settings are applied to the pieces. Discrepancies in the results obtained in computations by different persons will be resolved immediately by the Fire Direction Officer before firing.

b. Fire direction centers will make every effort to keep abreast of friendly troop locations and post an overlay of these locations on firing charts. Fire Direction Officers will examine the location of each target plot and the plots of rounds fired in adjustment relative to the friendly forces and no-fire lines or areas.

c. Rules of engagement as specified in Annex A to reference 1c must be scrupulously followed to avoid noncombatant casualties. Fires near inhabited areas will be governed by the following additional guidance.

(1) Target plots will be compared with best available data on locations of inhabited areas.

(2) Unobserved fires should not be planned closer than 1000 meters from friendly villages or hamlets unless specifically requested by ARVN or clearly identified as hostile and cleared for firing by ARVN/GVN authorities.

d. Full use will be made of available metro and survey data. Registrations will be conducted for every charge likely to be used from a given position. For base camps these registrations will be conducted concurrently with determination of metro data and as frequently as required to ensure accurate delivery of fire. For tactical field positions every effort will be made to conduct registrations as soon after occupation of position as possible. If fires must be delivered before registration, the best corrections available will be applied, e.g. VE and recent metro message.

e. Commanders and air observers will periodically request check rounds on registration points and known concentrations to check accuracy of firing data. Defensive concentrations will be check fired with utmost caution. A single round will be used as an initial check, and a full battery sheaf will be subsequently fired if time and ammunition permit. Individual piece corrections, if known, will be applied when defensive concentrations are plotted near friendly positions.

f. Personnel shift changes in fire direction centers will not be made until the new shift has been thoroughly briefed by the old shift on the tactical situation, location of supported units, concentrations fired and all other pertinent information.

g. Drills for fire direction and firing battery personnel should be conducted frequently under close supervision. Deviations from prescribed procedures detected during these drills must not be tolerated.

h. Batteries on independent missions should have augmented FDC's to insure a 24 hour capability with rested and alert personnel.


Reg No 385-3, HQ II FFORCEV APO San Francisco 96266, 2 Oct 66 (Contd)

6. REPORTS: Prompt and thorough investigation and reporting of incidents will be made in accordance with reference 1b.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

OFFICIAL:

RICHARD T. KNOWLES  
Brigadier General, GS  
Chief of Staff



VERNON R. RIDER  
Colonel, AGC  
Adjutant General

DISTRIBUTION:

Special  
CG, 1st Inf Div - 100  
CG, 25th Inf Div - 100  
CG, 173d Abn Bde - 50  
CO, 11th ACR - 50  
CG, 1 ATF - 25  
CO, 23d Arty Gp - 50  
CO, 54th Arty Gp - 50  
II FFORCEV  
G1 - 1  
G2 - 1  
G3 - 3  
G4 - 1  
G5 - 1  
Engr - 1  
Signal - 1  
II FFORCEV ARTY  
S1 - 1  
S2 - 1  
S3 - 10  
S4 - 1

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
Headquarters, II Field Force Vietnam  
APO San Francisco 96266

AVFB-CG

30 September 1966

SUBJECT: Prevention of Errors in Artillery and Mortar Fires

TO: Commanding General, 1st Infantry Division, APO 96345  
Commanding General, 25th Infantry Division, APO 96225  
Commanding General, 173d Airborne Brigade, APO 96227  
Commanding General, 196th Infantry Brigade, APO 96225  
Commanding General, II Field Force Vietnam Artillery,  
APO 96266  
Commander, 1st Australian Task Force, AFPO 3, c/o  
APO 96291

## 1. References:

- a. Letter, AVX-CG, HQ II FFORCEV, 17 June 1966,  
subject: Errors in Artillery and Mortar Fires.
- b. Confidential Message, AVFB-FAC, 80465, HQ II FFORCEV,  
200237Z August 1966, subject: Employment of Fire Support (U).

2. So far during the month of September 1966, thirteen incidents involving US artillery and mortar units in II Field Force Vietnam resulted in 6 US KIA, 30 US WIA, 9 Vietnamese civilians killed and 18 civilians wounded. Investigation of these incidents has revealed that seven were caused by errors in fire direction centers, one by defective equipment, one by failure to obtain clearance to fire and one by error of a forward observer. Three incidents involved no error, but civilians were killed or injured by fires directed into areas properly cleared by ARVN and GVN authorities.

## 3. The following were contributing causes:

- a. Lack of close, continuing supervision of the actions of chart operators and computers by an officer in the fire direction center.

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AVFB-CG

30 September 1966

SUBJECT: Prevention of Errors in Artillery and Mortar Fires

b. Failure of infantry units to give the firing battery the exact location and limits of their position and failure of the firing battery to request this information.

c. In changing personnel shifts in the fire direction center, failure of the old shift to brief thoroughly the new shift on the tactical situation, location of supported units, concentrations fired, and other pertinent information.

d. Lack of, or failure to follow, a unit SOP on check procedures in the fire direction center so that every measurement, computation and transmission is checked by at least two individuals acting independently.

e. Failure of executive officer, chief of firing battery, and chiefs of section to make independent checks of the laying of the battery and of all settings on the pieces.

f. Fatigue and inexperience of personnel operating in fire direction centers.

4. Other errors discovered during investigations which did not contribute directly to the injury or damage in these particular incidents include:

a. Failure to register upon occupying position.

b. Lack of position area survey.

c. Use of one charge in firing in a concentration and a different charge in refiring the same concentration on call.

5. In spite of the emphasis placed on reducing the human errors made in artillery and mortar fires, reference paragraph 1 above, there has been a sharp increase in the number of these incidents. It should be apparent to all commanders that increased attention and supervision is required.

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AVFB-CG

30 September 1966

SUBJECT: Prevention of Errors in Artillery and Mortar Fires

6. Within the next few days, a II Field Force Vietnam regulation on prevention of artillery and mortar incidents will be published. The information contained in this regulation is not new. Current field manuals cover the subject in more detail. I believe that full application of the procedures outlined in this regulation will reduce errors to the minimum. I particularly desire increased emphasis in the following areas:

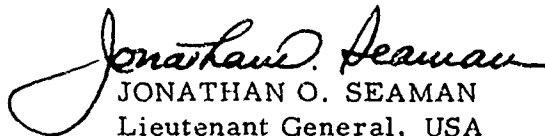
a. Drills for fire direction and firing battery personnel should be conducted frequently under the supervision of the best qualified officer and noncommissioned officer personnel available.

b. Batteries which are operating independently should have their FDC's augmented with qualified officer and enlisted personnel from battalions to permit fully effective 24 hour operation. Fatigue and stress contribute to errors.

c. Battalion commanders, and particularly G3's, must constantly observe in detail the procedures being followed in battery fire direction centers and firing batteries and make on-the-spot corrections.

d. Accuracy of fire should be emphasized over speed. Adequate speed will come from training.

7. While I expect errors in artillery and mortar firing to be investigated immediately and thoroughly, additional attention must be paid to the prevention of errors. Needless loss of life and injury to our own people and to non-combatants must be stopped.

  
JONATHAN O. SEAMAN  
Lieutenant General, USA  
Commanding

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AVFBC-H (14 Nov 66)

1st Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 October  
1966 (RCS CSFOR-65)(U)

DA, HQ II Field Force Vietnam, APO San Francisco 96266 8 JAN 1967

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Dept of the Army,  
Washington, D.C., 20310


1. The Operational Report-Lessons Learned submitted by Headquarters, II Field Force Vietnam Artillery for the quarter ending 31 October 1966 is considered adequate and is forwarded herewith.

2. This headquarters has reviewed subject report and concurs with the comments and recommendations contained therein.

3. Reference Section II, Part 2, par B, Aircraft for Artillery Units, page 20: Aircraft are now allocated on an air mission basis. As additional aircraft become available this year, the mission requirement of the artillery will be more easily met.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

1 Incl  
nc

  
WAYNE D. BLANTON  
WO- W1, USA  
Acting Asst AG

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS;  
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS.  
DOD DIR 5200.10

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